

SEPTEMBER 13

As they pass through the Valley of Baca,
they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools.

Psalm 84:6

From the pen of Charles Spurgeon:

This verse teaches that the blessings obtained by one person often prove to be of service to others, just as these springs would provide refreshing water for those who followed. For example, a particular book may provide great comfort to others and to you, like Jonathan's staff "dipped ... into the honeycomb" (1 Sam. 14:27), which provided honey for sustenance and brightened his eyes.

Suddenly we realize someone has been here before us and not only dug a well for himself but also for us. Books such as *Night of Weeping* — *Words for the Suffering Family of God* (by Horatius Bonar, 1808 – 1889), *Midnight Harmonies* (by Octavius Winslow, 1808 – 1878), *A Crook in the Lot* (by Thomas Boston, 1676 – 1732), and *Comfort for Mourners* (by Henry Law, 1797 – 1884), as well as the hymn "Eternal Day" (by Charles Wesley, 1707 – 1788), have all been wells dug by a fellow pilgrim for himself but also have proved to be just as useful to others.

We especially see this in the Psalms such as: "Why are you downcast, O my soul?" (Ps. 42:5). Travelers are always delighted to see the footprints of others on the barren shore ahead, and we love to see the evidence of fellow pilgrims while passing through the valley of tears. These pilgrims may dig the well, but strangely enough, it gets filled from the top, not the bottom. We may use the well, but the blessing does not spring from it, for it is heaven that fills it with rain. A warhorse may be prepared for battle, but safety is of the Lord. The means may be connected to the end, but the means does not produce the end itself. As in our text verse today, the rain fills the pools so that they become useful reservoirs for the water. The labor to dig the wells was im-

portant, but it would have been useless without God's divine work in sending the rain.

Grace is a good comparison to the rain for its purity, for its refreshing and revitalizing work, for the fact it is sent from above, and for the truth that it is a work of God's sovereignty in either being given or withheld. May you, dear reader, have showers of blessing, and may the wells you have dug be filled with water! Consider what your efforts would be without the smile of heaven! They would be like clouds without rain and pools without water.

O God of love, open the windows of heaven and pour us out a blessing!

From the pen of Jim Reimann:

Charles Spurgeon himself truly exemplifies today's devotion. He "dug the well" of these devotions, originally published in 1865, and today we are able to continue to drink from that well. Yet what would these devotions be without the Lord who poured the "rain" of insight and understanding into the life of Spurgeon? And what would they be without a life fully submitted to God and His Word?

Today Spurgeon mentions a number books, some written by his contemporaries and others from the previous century. As is often the case, men of God have reached back to the saints of old for instruction. Perhaps we should think of these saints reaching forward to us by the hand of God, lovingly teaching us by the power of the Holy Spirit and guiding us "into all truth" (John 16:13).